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reading those early books what one notes is excellent writing, a good knowledge of literature, especially eighteenth-century literature, a keen sense for event, and a total lack of grip upon human nature. Her books were book-made; the work of an imagination fed upon romance, but, alas! strangely lacking in heart and human experience. But Mary Johnston, like Ellen Glasgow, has been a serious craftsman. She also has meant to do the thing worth while at all costs to herself, and her novels have steadily improved. *Lewis Rand* added to a fine historical sense a real power of characterization.

The Long Roll is the best fictional study of the Civil War that has yet been done in America, and it achieves the impossible; it fairly makes that worn and hackneyed subject throbbingly alive. The very marches and countermarches, the despatches and orders, take on life under Mary Johnston's keen and vivid sense of the past. Old soldiers, men who have marched through the very roads she describes and fought the battles she writes of, say that her minute knowledge of every detail of the war is little less than a miracle. The portrait of Stonewall Jackson is, of course, the central point of interest, and it is, as portraits go, doubtless remarkably true. His lemon and his feet are, perhaps, somewhat too much in the high light, but the whole thing is as able an historical study as we can show in the fiction of America.

A BIG HORSE TO RIDE. By E. B. DEWING. New York: The Macmillan Company.

It is the way of adolescence to begin with self-contemplation and slowly to widen the gaze until it reaches the outer world. Miss Dewing is amazingly young and amazingly clever. If she continues to write novels and to turn her penetrating gaze slowly from the inner to the outer life she may do something very well worth while. Those writers who begin with the outer apprehension, as did Meredith, often become too intellectualized, too impartial and inclusive for a wide audience. Those who persistently harp on the personal string go crazy, as did Nietzsche. There is a happy medium in which the personality, while never dissolved, is slowly broadened to take in the surrounding world, and we get as a result a universe temperamentally sifted.

Just now Miss Dewing is still at the intensely subjective stage of existence. We do not mean to say that because Miss Dewing gives us in *A Big Horse to Ride* the autobiography of a dancer that she herself is a dancer. Rather we fancy she has made a close study of the cool-headed, light-toed Genée and has endowed her with the writer's swift and curious intelligence and so made a very enthralling heroine. We note with pleasure throughout the book the insistence upon "intellectual integrity," which is as much the dominant ideal of the highly educated woman of to-day as tender susceptibility and emotional submission were of the Early Victorian lady. Not that the young lady of the novel is passionless; there are more love-affairs, light and heavy, than the old-fashioned like to contemplate; she runs the gamut from a chase around the tea-table to be kissed to the six years' desertion of an estimable husband; but with all this she still records that "a skirt held well out of the dust" is, after all, the most fertile field of passional analysis. Exactly how dust would be symbolized to this proudly intellectual lady we cannot guess. The old-fashioned lady did not

admit with so much frankness the wavering of her emotions. Perhaps her emotions wavered and she did not tell. At any rate, the purging of the mind by free confession and careful analysis is the modern method and the one Miss Dewing adopts. One lover is what she calls "the lute-playing of love"; another represented "the love of the flesh, a frank delight of the eye; flesh at its highest"; and shortly after came the husband who represented dominance, quiet force. One hardly knows whether it is in keeping with the general character of this husband that after six years' absence a telegram, "I am coming to you," should be responded to with, "Good!" However, so the tale runs, and whatever the tale may not be,—and it is neither broad nor deep,—it is clever, amazingly clever. There is, of course, in the book what Emerson noted in Margaret Fuller, "a rather mountainous Me." The young dancer who is the author's heroine undoubtedly sees the world, life, human nature, as a whetstone upon which to sharpen her wits. Are clever women more egotistical than men, or do we notice it more just because we are less used to it in them? It is hard to decide. Usually a young man has outgrown his "mountainous Me" at twenty six or seven. Life has disciplined and divested him; custom is more tender to women. Miss Dewing is once more tremendously clever, and some day all this material of cleverness may work down into wisdom and reflection and she will give us a good novel. But let her, meantime, beware of the standards and ideals of Gertrude Atherton and apply her heart to getting wisdom.

THE VISIONING. By SUSAN GLASPELL. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1911.

One's first thought in reading this pretty tale is that the mantle of the Duchess has fallen upon Miss Glaspell. But despite the fact that it is a young girl's book of a young girl's world, life has so changed that the atmosphere of the Duchess's people can no longer be evoked. In her slight and pleasant way Miss Glaspell copes with the most serious problems of human civilization.

The child's world is nearer to heaven than the man's, and this young girl's book is purer and lovelier than the books of many a more sophisticated mind. Perhaps if more young girls were taught to help and to love and to console just whenever and wherever they could,—scorning the consequences,—we might some day have a better world than we have to-day. Miss Glaspell writes with dangerous ease, some grace, some effervescence of spirit. She grapples lightly with the insincerities of ecclesiasticism, and one of her best-drawn and most amusing figures is the good bishop who wants to stem the uprising tide of socialism. The conversation in which Katie, the heroine, suddenly asks her uncle, the bishop, "Do you ever think about Christ?" is very striking.

The book is a book for young minds. It is a girl's book written by a girl, but it may do much toward inducing generous ideals and kindly feelings, and it is throughout light and agreeable reading. It makes no pretence at seriousness and has from the standpoint of literature no existence at all. But it is a book to give the young without hesitation. It will interest and it will not hurt.